

**Critical Infrastructure Protection  
Food and Agriculture Sector**  
(March 22, 2004 Meeting Key Agreements)

**Agreements**

- 1) Participants agreed to organize across the Food and Agriculture Sectors into one integrated sector organization.
- 2) Participants converged on an organizational structure that included an: 1) Agricultural and Food Sector Council; 2) Sub-Councils; and 3) ISAC. They noted that, over time, the organizational structure may evolve to better meet the sector's needs.

Council

- a. The role of the Council will be to serve as the primary, policy-level interface with DHS and the government on homeland security matters.
- b. The Council's decision making power will not encroach on individual sector members' interests.
- c. The Council will facilitate intra-sector communications and set processes for information sharing.
- d. The Council will communicate the sector's needs and requests for resources to the government.
- e. One of the first activities of the Council should be to establish a clearinghouse of existing sector activities related to homeland security needs so that the sector and government can reduce the chances of redundancy of efforts.
- f. The sector can begin functioning right away using the Alliance for Food Security as a basis enhanced by participation of the Animal Agriculture Coalition and others.
- g. The Council should develop the sector's organizational structure to the granular level; ensure that the definition and membership for each sub-council are clear; and map the sector organization to its government counterparts.
- h. The leadership of the Sector Council will be by an executive committee.

Sub-Councils

- a. Sub-councils will articulate their priorities and action items to the Council, which then can be communicated to the government.
- b. The sub-councils will name representatives to the council (two from each with one alternate).
- c. Some consideration should be given to adding representatives to the council from "high risk" food groups.
- d. Each Sub-council will define its membership and priority issues.
- e. Each sub-council will need flexibility in prioritizing and identifying its needs, but should examine the general areas of: communications and information sharing; research and development, including detection; incident management; vulnerability assessments; and recovery.

ISAC

- a. The group will build upon and expand the breadth of participation of the current ISAC (managed by FMI) to include the agriculture sector beginning immediately.
- b. The ISAC's position in the overall organizational structure requires additional discussions.

## **Key Issues and Conditions Critical to Success**

1. Industry is sensitive about whether and how to share vulnerability information with government.
2. Industry does not need to know sources of data but does need to know the scope of threat (e.g., geographic/industry sector focus).
3. Sector representatives must be bona fide full and equal partners with government and should be included in decisions that affect the sector.
4. DHS must provide security and confidentiality of information provided by sector members to the government.  
Communications must be two-way. When industry provides information to the government, the government should respond with feedback in good faith. And the reverse should be true as well.
5. DHS should work with the private sector at each development stage of new programs in order to reduce redundancy, take advantage of current programs/systems, and ensure clear value.
6. DHS should work collaboratively with the sector to assess sector problems.
7. Security clearances are important, but issues related to making information useable and actionable are more important. Dialogue between the government and industry is critical to understanding the actual value of information, threats, and vulnerabilities.
8. DHS need to clarify its metrics to identify when the group has reached various milestones, such as when a sector is sufficiently organized.
9. The government needs to establish a “mirror” organizational structure to enable balanced and effective communication with the private sector.

## **Potential Barriers**

1. Lack of trust in the federal government's judgment.
2. Lack of faith in the federal ability to protect business critical information, such as trade secrets or brand value.
3. Lack of new funding or clear value or return for proposed new initiatives.
4. Lack of direction from DHS and clarity about DHS' objectives and desired timetable.

## **Next Steps**

1. Disseminate, brief, and secure commitment from members and colleagues about the proposed Food and Agricultural Sector structure.
2. Nominate and name representatives to sub-councils and Council.
3. Name members of the Council's Executive Committee.
4. Convene sub-councils so that they can: define their roles and structures; establish priorities; and, identify needs.
5. Ensure industry validates the government's vulnerability assessments.
6. Elevate the profile of critical infrastructure protection in the Food and Agriculture Sector by having Governor Ridge invite CEOs from the food and agriculture sector to a meeting where Ridge could convey the importance of the issue and the government's commitment to working with industry.
7. Create a “governmental mirror” of the sector organizational structure.
8. Clarify when and how the government will make resources (money and expertise) available to the sector.
9. Assure that information will flow in two directions – to USG from industry and from USG to industry
10. Create incentives to ensure broad industry participation in the sector structure.